

**Governor's
Workforce
Board**

Rhode Island

Today's Vision... Tomorrow's Opportunity.



**Governor's Workforce Board
Strategic Investments and Evaluation
Committee**

**March 2, 2016
Meeting Minutes**

Committee Members Present: Mike Grey, Chair, Mario Bueno, Channavy Chhay, Constance Howes, Janet Raymond
Committee Members Absent: Scott Jensen, Suzy Alba, Cheryl Merchant, George Nee
GWB Staff Present: Rick Brooks, Amelia Roberts, Dan Brown, Sherri Carello
DLT Staff Present: Sean Fontes, Diane Gagne, Joe Agresti, Lisa D'Agostino, Scott Greco, Carlos Ribeiro
Other Guests Present: Malcolm Baxter, BIS; Philip Less, RIDE; Alexis Stern UWRI; Heather Gaydos, EPI
Location: Department of Labor and Training, Conference Room 73-2

Call to Order

Chair Grey called the meeting to order at 8:32 am and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes

Chair Grey asked for a review of the January 14, 2016 Strategic Investments & Evaluation Committee meeting minutes. Chair Grey asked if there was a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

VOTE: Constance Howes moved to approve, seconded by Channavy Chhay. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Program Focus: GWB Work Immersion

Chair Grey asked Rick Brooks and Amelia Roberts to provide an overview of the RI Work Immersion Program Report. A. Roberts reviewed the expenditures and outcomes for Work Immersion participants and employers for activity from FY2014 to FY2016 through February 24, 2016. She reviewed the funds awarded for college students, unemployed adults, and CTE students, noting the \$405,152 will likely be drawn down on as work experiences increase for the summer months. A. Roberts presented the total participants and permanently hired participants for all three fiscal years. C. Howes inquired about the number of unemployed adults permanently hired in FY15 and whether we are satisfied with the results. A. Roberts stated that the number of total participants will not increase but that the permanently hired participants for FY15 are still likely to increase as additional forms are submitted by employers. A. Roberts highlighted the total employer partners for each of the programs for FY2016 and average hourly wage of work experiences vs. permanently hired participants. She noted 49% of CTE participants 26% of college students were awarded academic credit for their work experiences and discussed the breakout of work immersion businesses by industry.

The committee recommended including a breakout of businesses by industry for each program and discussed how the GWB can increase diversity in the program. Referring to the FY16 referral agency information, the committee discussed outreach to certain agencies/schools to increase their participation in the program. The committee also recommended breaking out the agency information by permanently hired participants.

R. Brooks discussed a recent report summarizing employer feedback about their experience providing subsidized work experiences to long-term unemployed adults. He noted almost all of the employers said that the subsidy was a significant factor in their decision to participate in the program and enabled them to take a chance on an individual with little or no work experience. He also stated that 64% of the employers had never provided a paid internship. 14% of the businesses did not have a vacancy at the time of the internship and ultimately created a position to retain the participant. 89% of the employers said they offered a position to at least one of their Work Immersion participants. R. Brooks added that the rate of job offers were higher and the employer satisfaction was higher when the referral came from an organization that provided comprehensive pre-employment services. The committee discussed the value of supportive services and the increased confidence in a participant that has received comprehensive services. R. Brooks noted the challenges with paperwork will be addressed and the process will be simplified with the FY17 application. The committee discussed how pre-employment services in conjunction with a wage subsidy is cost effective for businesses and systematically effective.

Program Focus: GWB Incumbent Worker Training

Referring to the Incumbent Worker Training Grant Program Report, A. Roberts discussed the expenditures and outcomes for FY2016 through February 19, 2016. She highlighted the total number of businesses that have received grants (87), noting that 13 grants were awarded in March for a total \$1.1 million in funds awarded. She reviewed the total number of participants who completed training, grantee breakout by business size, and the breakdown of grants by amount awarded. A. Roberts highlighted that 66% of the grants were less than \$10,000 and presented the grant companies by industry representation. She noted 36% of the companies were new grantees in FY2016. R. Brooks reviewed proposed changes to the application process for FY17, noting that grants of \$5,000 or less will see a quicker turnaround and will be reviewed and scored by GWB staff. He also added the application is more collaborative and applicants are provided feedback or technical assistance and are able to make adjustments. R. Brooks also highlighted that the IWTG application will be more user friendly and businesses will be able to submit their applications online.

Real Jobs RI: Tracking and reporting of JDF funds

Chair Grey asked Robert Kalaskowski to discuss RJRI tracking and reporting of JDF funds. R. Kalaskowski provided a brief update of the partners, noting some of the partners started their work in January and most will be up and running by March or April. In terms of reporting, he stated any participant that is being trained through Real Jobs RI will be enrolled in EmployRI, including new hires and incumbent workers. R. Kalaskowski discussed the benefit of enrolling participants in EmployRI, including pulling report by funding stream. He noted there is a hierarchy of funds and funding used for participants is based on eligibility. C. Howes noted performance should be based on the program and not necessarily the source of funds for the particular participant seeing as JDF funds will be used for infrastructure. R. Kalaskowski

discussed the RI Builders Association program that will be using JDF funds to build a job bank to connect construction companies with jobseekers. Pertaining to participant information, the intent is to look eight quarters back and eight quarters after the training has occurred to determine how the training has impacted a participant's earning trajectory. C. Howes noted that Real Jobs has not required businesses to provide matching funds for incumbent worker training grants, while GWB Incumbent Worker Training Grants require a 50% employer match. R. Kalaskowski indicated that matching employer contributions are likely to become a requirement in the future. R. Kalaskowski discussed active contract management that the Board will be informed of and how it can be used to inform policy decisions. Chair Grey noted that data can not only be useful in understating how a program is doing but can also drive results.

Adjournment

With no further business, Chair Grey asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Constance Howes moved to approve, seconded by Channavy Chhay. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:06 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amelia-Anne Roberts